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MISSIONARY HEROES COURSE

LIFE STORIES OF GREAT MISSIONARIES FOR
TEEN AGE BOYS

ARRANGED IN PROGRAMS

Captain Luke Bickel

Master Mariner of the Inland Sea

SOURCE BOOK

"CAPTAIN BICKEL OF THE INLAND SEA"

By **CHARLES K. HARRINGTON**

Program Prepared by
FLOYD L. CARR

BAPTIST BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONARY EDUCATION
276 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

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Program based on CAPTAIN BICKEL OF THE INLAND SEA

by CHARLES K. HARRINGTON

Fleming H. Revell Company, \$2.00

FOREWORD

THE *Missionary Heroes Course* for Boys meets a real need. It is a series of missionary programs for boys based on great biographies which every boy should know. Courses Number One and Number Two are now available, each providing programs for twelve months, which may be used in the monthly meetings of boys' groups. Other courses are in preparation and will be issued for subsequent years.

It is suggested that the leader purchase two copies of each booklet; one to be kept for reference and the other to be cut up to provide each boy with his assigned part. Some may prefer to purchase one booklet and typewrite the parts for assignment. In order to tie together the life incidents as they are presented by the boys, the leader should master the facts outlined in the biographical sketch and read carefully the volume upon which the program is based. These volumes are missionary classics and may be made the basis of a worthwhile library of Christian adventure.

Boys are keenly interested in stories of adventure and achievement and it is hoped that participation in the programs will lead many of the lads to read these great missionary biographies. Attention is called to the twenty-three other life-story programs now available for Courses Number One and Number Two, both of which are listed on the last page. The books upon which these programs are based can be ordered from the nearest literature headquarters. Portraits of these missionary heroes are also available for purchase at fifteen cents a copy.

While these programs have been developed to meet the needs of boys' organizations of all types—i.e., Organized Classes, Boy Scouts, Knights of King Arthur, Kappa Sigma Pi, etc.,—they were especially prepared for the chapters of the *Royal Ambassadors*, a missionary organization for teen age boys originating in the Southland and recently adapted to the needs of the Northern Baptist Convention by the Department of Missionary Education. We commend these materials to all lovers of boys.

WILLIAM A. HILL.

PROGRAM FOR MEETING

1. Scripture Reading: Psalm 107:23-32, beginning “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord. . . .” (See the account of his seafaring experiences as a young man, pages 43-45, 47 of “Captain Luke Bickel of the Inland Sea” and excerpt No. 6, following).
2. Prayer.
3. Hymn: “Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me,” introduced with a reference to his first voyage in the “Fukuin Maru.” (See pages 91-92 and excerpt No. 10 following.)
4. Introduction to Life Story* (based upon pages 1-34 of the above work).
5. Birth in America and Schooling in Germany (pages 35, 39-40, 40-41).
6. Early Experience in Seafaring (pages 43-45, 47).
7. Responding to the Call (pages 49-50, 50-51).
8. Providing the Gospel Ship (pages 74-75, 79).
9. Building the “Fukuin Maru” (pages 82-84).
10. The First Voyage of the Ship (pages 91-92).
11. Conversion of Hirata San (pages 140-141, 143).
12. Progress of the Work (pages 254, 256-257).
13. “Sunset and Evening Star” (pages 266-267, 268-269).

* The leader should read the brief sketch in this pamphlet and also, if possible, the book “Captain Bickel of the Inland Sea” by Charles K. Harrington, in order to fill in the gaps between the assignments.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN LUKE BICKEL

LUKE BICKEL, "Bringer of the Morning" to the Inland Sea, Japan, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on September 21, 1866. His father, who was of German birth, was serving at the time as city missionary to the Germans, removing shortly after to Cleveland to become Superintendent of the German Baptist Publication Society. His mother was of American birth, being employed as a school teacher in the city of Rochester, N. Y., at the time of her marriage.

When Luke Bickel was twelve years of age, his father, Philip Bickel, D.D., was called to succeed Dr. Johann G. Oncken in leadership of the Baptist forces in Germany. For a time they made their home at Wamburg but later removed to Cassel. It was no easy matter for the American-born and trained lad to adjust himself to German schools, but he applied himself to his studies for the next six years, graduating from the Reformed Church Academy in 1880, and taking three years of collegiate work at Soest and one year at Wandsbeck Gymnasium. It was during this period that he was led to accept Christ as his personal Saviour and unite with the Hamburg Church.

His love of the sea being pronounced, his father apprenticed him in his eighteenth year on an English merchant sailing ship. During his ten years of sea-faring life, he exerted a strong influence for good by reason of his courageous, consistent Christian example. At the age of twenty-eight, he attained the coveted rank of "Captain," receiving his certificate from the British Board of Trade. His marriage to Annie Burgess of Norwich, England, the year before winning his coveted promotion, led to the exchange of his seafaring life for the superintendency of the London Baptist Publication Society.

Under his successful leadership, the work of the Publication Society prospered. After four years of notable service, a call came to him which was to link his name with the foundation of a great work, the Mission to the Inland Sea of Japan. Robert Allen, a prosperous merchant of Glasgow, Scotland, had offered to present in memory of his mother, a Gospel ship for work in the Inland Sea. The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society,

in accepting the gift, turned to Captain Luke Bickel as the man for the post.

After a year's study in Spurgeon's College, he arrived in Kobe with his wife and two children in May, 1898, to begin his work. Two tasks faced him—the superintending of the building of the Gospel ship and the learning of the Japanese language. His ten years at sea contributed to the first task, and his mastery of English, German, Dutch, French and Spanish, to the second. Finally, on September 13, 1899, the “Fukuin Maru” was formally dedicated to her mission of carrying the Gospel message to the islanders of the Inland Sea.

Sailing on her maiden voyage from Yokohama to Hiogo, with “Old Glory” at her masthead, she proved her seaworthiness by weathering a typhoon. After a vexatious delay of ten weeks for the official government papers, on December 2, 1898, the “Fukuin Maru” left Hiogo harbor to make her first visit to the eastern islands of the Inland Sea. As he faced his future work, Captain Bickel wrote home: “If hard work, earnest prayer and a strong faith in God can accomplish anything, it shall be accomplished. . . . I will work day and night, as God gives me strength, for ten years without looking for visible results.”

He had worked out definitely the following lines of strategy: first, to touch only those islands where no work was being done; second, to thoroughly reach every village on every island; third, to seek to reach all classes of men and women; fourth, to divide the islands into groups, securing ultimately an evangelist for each group; and fifth, to emphasize the duty of every believer to bear witness to others. With these in view, he set himself to three definite objectives: first, the evangelizing of his crew; second, the training of the necessary evangelists; and third, the winning of the islanders to Jesus Christ.

The achieving of the first objective is one of the most interesting stories in the annals of Christian missions. The first of the seven sailors manning the “Fukuin Maru,” to show any evidence of a changed life, was a young man named Kida Eтаро. When he was lost overboard in a storm, Hirata San, the boatswain, and the ringleader of the godless crew, was profoundly stirred. On April 18, 1903, he and others of the crew were baptized. This was the first baptism since the inception of the work four years before. Shortly after his conversion, Hirata San began to preach in the villages and ultimately he was given a small Japanese sailing boat and appointed as colporter at large.

The second objective was next faced and the islands were divided into five groups to facilitate their organized evangeliza-

tion. One by one, promising men, developed through marked Christian experiences, were carefully trained as evangelists and appointed to superintend the work in the respective groups. The spiritual experiences of Pastors Ito, Toda and Shibata enrich the archives containing the life-stories of twice-born men out of every "kindred, people and nation."

No small part in the progress made in achieving the third objective,—the winning of the Islanders to Jesus Christ—is due to the Christian personality of Captain Bickel. The Gospel Ship itself challenged interest, and the kindergartens and Sunday schools fostered that interest, but the Captain,—“tall and shining and fair and straight”—won friends right and left by his friendly efficiency. His own utterances reveal the man: “If we wish to bring help to a man, we must be willing to pay the cost.” . . . “Is it worth while? The man who comes and mocks, the man who comes for rice, the Pharisee—is it worth while to spend a life on these? My God, my God, how could I doubt Thee? Take my life and use it to the last shred for whomsoever Thou wilt.”

The growing work necessitated a larger and faster ship and on June 2, 1914, the new “Fukuin Maru” was dedicated at Setoda, amid great rejoicing. It was twice the size of the predecessor and equipped with splendid engines and every modern convenience. Shortly after the new ship had been made available for an enlarged work, the shadow of the World War fell across even this Ship of Peace. The Japanese government issued an order barring from the Inland Sea all ships flying foreign flags. After a year and four months, the ban was lifted and in April, 1916, Captain Bickel sailed on his last cruise. He rejoiced to find the work well established with some 300 converts scattered through sixty islands. Sixty Sunday schools had been established, with an enrollment of over 4,000 pupils. In February of the following year, he was laid aside by a severe illness. The approach of the annual meeting of the “Fukuin Maru Church,” which was to call together the scattered church members, cut short his convalescence. From the strain of this strenuous week at Tonosho, he went directly to Kobe for a necessary operation. His years of overwork and the lingering effects of his recent illness counted against him and blood poisoning and septic pneumonia developed. On May 11, 1917, when in his fifty-first year, he “met his Pilot face to face” and “crossed the bar.”

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN LUKE BICKEL

Reprinted from "Captain Bickel of the Inland Sea,"

by Charles K. Harrington,

by permission of the publishers, Fleming H. Revell Company.

Birth in America and Schooling in Germany. (Pp. 35, 39-40, 40-41.)

On the twenty-first of September, in the year of grace 1866, in the humble but happy home of a city missionary in Cincinnati, was born the hero of this story. It is recorded as a matter of interest in the family annals that on the self-same day the head of the household was honoured by appointment to the editorship of the religious publications issued by the German Baptist churches of the United States. Luke, as the newcomer was named, was born an American, his German-born father having long since taken out his naturalization papers; but in blood he was English-American on his mother's side, and German on his father's.

Already four children had come to bless the Bickel home, and later came four others, Luke standing half-way down the family line. His birth fell at an auspicious time. The Civil War was over. Pastor Bickel had been welcomed back from army service by his family and his church. He had built him a house on one of the hills beside the city, and in the pure air of those breezy heights, and in the warm atmosphere of a home where love reigned, the baby boy thrived finely. . . .

In 1878, when Luke was twelve years of age, the family migrated back to Germany, to make their home first at Hamburg and later at Cassel. Of the nine children born to the Bickels, three had died in early childhood. Of the six remaining, Karl, the eldest, was just out of his teens, while Beatrice, the youngest, was but a baby. The family home life was American rather than German. There was always an American flag in the house. Meals were cooked and served in the American style. German and English were both in common use in the family intercourse. While in America, special attention had been paid to the German, now in Germany, stress was laid on the English. In whichever language any one of the children happened to be addressed by his parents, he was expected to reply

in the same language. Luke thus began life with two native tongues, and to these he later added Dutch, French, Spanish, and of course Japanese, as well as gaining some knowledge of several other languages. . . .

Luke had been for some years a pupil in Stirling School, Cleveland, and did not find it easy to accustom himself to the quite different methods of instruction followed in Germany. For this reason he failed to find much pleasure in his school life in that country. He made good progress, however, and while not a bookworm, always stood high in his classes. His favourite studies were geography, music, and the Bible. On being graduated from the Reformed Church Academy, Hamburg, in 1880, he was sent to Soest, where he took three years' collegiate work, after which he spent a year at Wandsbeck Gymnasium.

Early Experiences in Seafaring. (Pp. 43-45, 47.)

Luke's interest in the Hamburg Mission to Seamen may have been partly due to his own longing for a life on the salt water. Although born in an inland city, and without a sight of the ocean until his twelfth year, he had early conceived a passion for the sea. His father used to smilingly say that it was "all Grandma Clark's fault." She had fired the boy's heart with the tale of Commodore Perry and his famous Expedition to the coasts of the Far East, beyond the wide Pacific, and had taken him so often to the Perry Monument in Cleveland that it had made a profound impression on him. It is safe to say that neither of them dreamed that some day he would enter the door which Perry had thrown open, and spend his life for the people whom Perry had introduced to the modern world.

Luke's first ocean voyage, from New York to Hamburg, might well have dampened his boyish ardour for a sailor's life. He suffered much from seasickness. Indeed, he seems to have been constitutionally susceptible to that unpleasant malady, and even after becoming a professional seaman was frequently troubled in this way. At Hamburg, Germany's great port, he was in touch with the sea and shipping. Great ocean liners came to the city quays from many lands beyond the Seven Seas. He played at sailing by carving out toy vessels, and by going voyaging in a rowboat, with his younger sister for mate, upon the placid Alster.

When Luke first expressed a desire to follow the sea, his father, unwilling for him to meet the hardships of a sailor's life, considering also no doubt the great temptations incident to it, and the wrecks of more than ships which strew its course, endeavoured to turn him from his purpose. Thinking to wean

him from the salt water, he sent him off to school in an inland city. This, however, proved of no avail. Whenever a holiday permitted, his first thought was to get to, and on, the nearest water. "If I have no boat, I take a tub," he used to say. On one occasion, a woman with two children was very anxious to get across a certain sheet of water, but the boatman refused to ferry her over on account of the tempestuous weather. Luke volunteered his services and rowed them safely across—an incident prophetic of the life of ready and fearless service for which God was preparing him.

Dr. Bickel was not yet able to reconcile himself to having his boy become a sailor, and made one more attempt to anchor him to the land. He proposed to him to take a medical course, and wrote to a doctor who happened to be a friend of the family, asking his advice in the matter. The reply was for some reason delayed, and meanwhile Luke informed his parents that he could only take up medical studies on the condition that when they were completed he might become a ship's doctor. His father, finding that he was hopelessly in love with the sea, withdrew his opposition and had him apprenticed, for a term of four years, on an English merchant sailing ship. He was now in his eighteenth year, six feet in height, a fine strapping young fellow. When he made his first visit after a year at sea, it was evident that he had not mistaken his calling, and that physically and spiritually the sailor life was agreeing with him. He came back as a happy Christian seaman. "He had found his element."

His voyages during these four years, following "the trail of the deep blue," took him far afield, to the west coast of South America, to Australia, and to Africa, and their incidents would make a fascinating tale of the sea if we could gather them together. It is worth recording that the voyages were made under sail, some of them in the famous clipper ships, the Ships of Tarshish of the day, and were far more interesting and eventful than if made under steam, in the prosaic modern fashion. He was literally a *sailor*, and thus his sea voyages were an especially good preparation for captaining the *Fukuin Maru*. . . .

Sometimes in after years, when storm or calm compelled the Little White Ship to lie at anchor, giving her Captain some hours of unwelcome leisure, he would beguile the time, as he paced with the writer the vessel's deck, with "sailors' yarns" of the days when he sailed the Seven Seas, tales of doings in the fore-castle, of visits to strange lands and foreign cities, of adventures on the Pacific and perils on the Atlantic, of the ways of seamen ashore and afloat. Mightily entertaining, and with a spiritual tonic, were these tales, seasoned with salt of humour and grace, told to the music of idly flapping sails or of dashing

waves, and full of a love for the wide sea with its far horizons, its mighty throb, its wonder and majesty and mystery; for though not himself a frequent maker of verse, he had something of a poet's vision of the beauty of the world.

Responding to the Call. (Pp. 49-50, 50-51.)

Even so the young couple could enjoy each other's society only in homeopathic doses, and when their first child, Philip, was born, Captain Bickel yielded to his wife's persuasions to seek employment on shore, for a time at least.

A kind Providence seconded Mrs. Bickel's desire. Some of the directors of the London Baptist Publication Society, who happened to be intimate friends of Dr. Philip Bickel and knew of his great success in promoting the work of the German Baptist Publishing Concern, invited the young captain to an interview, and as a result of the interview asked him to assume control of the Society's business. The business was at that time in an almost moribund condition, and was carried on in a small office on a back street in a very unfavourable location. The Captain accepted the task and determined to put the business on a better footing or die in the attempt. In its reorganization and rejuvenation, he discovered marked administrative and executive ability. The quality of the output was improved, and its quantity greatly increased, and within a year the business had so developed that the directors had moved it into better quarters in a business part of the city, on Paternoster Road. Here it continued to thrive and prosper, Captain Bickel devoting himself to it so earnestly and unremittingly, indeed, that there was danger of his breaking down his health, the free life of a sailor having unfitted him for the confinement of an office. At the close of four years, the London Baptist Publication House was financially sound and strong, was having a large yearly turnover, and was doing a work of great value to the Baptist churches of Britain.

Not content with the Christian service he was rendering through the Publication House, he interested himself in the spiritual needs of the great metropolis, engaging, like his father, in Sunday-school work, for he, too, was a lover of children.

He was in the midst of these fruitful labours when a call came to him to undertake a new work, in a strange land, on the opposite side of the planet; a call to leave his cozy English home, newly established after many years of homelessness on the lonely sea, and to become again a wanderer on the face of the waters. A man was wanted to sail a Gospel Ship and carry on a Gospel Mission among the neglected Islanders of Japan. A

ship-owner of Glasgow had made an offer of a vessel, and a Missionary Society was looking for a missionary mariner. Some leading members of that society had come to Europe on this quest, and had visited Dr. Bickel and his Publication House and Seminary at Hamburg. They told of the needs of the Islanders and of the opportunity now offered to meet those needs. "But all avails nothing," they said, "unless we can find a man. May not your son be he?" "It would not be becoming in me to recommend my own son," replied Dr. Bickel, "but your journey takes you to London. There you can meet and talk with him." Accordingly they crossed the Channel, and arriving in London, found the Captain busy with his duties at the Rooms on Paternoster Road. Their proposal that he should become missionary to the Japanese Islanders at first amazed him, he never having taken a course in theology, but finally he recognized in their request, the voice of Him who appeared to Isaiah in the temple: "Whom shall we send? and who will go for us?" and humbly replied, "Here am I, send me."

His love for the sea, and a long cherished feeling that some day he might become a missionary, made this response an easier one to him, though always when duty called, he had ears only for her voice. To Mrs. Bickel it was a real sacrifice to leave the home land, break up her home, and part from kindred and friends. Other missionary wives could have a fixed abode, no matter how humble or amid what unpleasant surroundings, which they might transform into a home, and where they might rear their children. The lady of the *Fukuin Maru* must be content to call the ship her home and to live a wanderer's life. But love and duty prevailed also with her.

Providing the Gospel Ship. (Pp. 74-75, 79.)

The ordinary world-tourist, leaning on the rail of the ocean liner, as she threads the narrow waters of the Inland Sea, probably bestows but little thought upon either the material or the spiritual condition of the people who have their homes on its Islands. He admires the ever varying but always lovely scenery. He views with interest the quaint craft that traverse its waters,—medieval trading vessels, low of prow and lofty of poop; fishing boats with sails aloft running up to market with the night's catch. He wonders to see steep island slopes tilled to their summits. As for those who sail the ships and cast the nets and cultivate the hills and live in the gray villages, they win scarcely a passing thought. But among many travelers there came one, a woman, who looked out upon the Islands not merely with the eyes of a tourist, but with a heart like His of whom we are told that He had compassion on the multitude.

To a dear old lady from Glasgow, who had carried in her thought and prayer the neglected folk of all the little islands of Japan, and through whose Christian liberality the Liu-Chiu Mission was begun, which, however, is another story, the Islanders of the Inland Sea are indebted for the opportunity to hear the Gospel story. It came to them after her earthly travels were ended and God had called her home to Himself. She had the joy of seeing the standard of the Cross set up in the Liu-Chiu capital; but it remained to her son, Mr. Robert Allan, in memory of his saintly and sainted mother, to give effect to her solicitude for the Island Folk of the Inner, as well as of the Outer, Seas. . . .

Two years after Mrs. Allan's memorable visit to Kobe, Mr. Robert Allan made to the American Baptist Missionary Union, through Dr. Thomson, an offer to provide means for the building of the vessel needed for the evangelization of the Inland Sea Islanders. Mr. Allan is the worthy son of a worthy mother, and his splendid gift of a mission ship is but one proof of his deep interest in Christian and philanthropic work, as the people of the city of Glasgow can abundantly testify. And, as we shall see hereafter, the gift of the ship was not the last proof of his interest in the Inland Sea work. It goes without saying that the Missionary Society embraced Mr. Allan's offer of a Mission Ship with joy and thankfulness, and we have already seen Providence preparing the man who could be at once the ship's captain and the missionary to the Islanders.

Building the "Fukuin Maru." (Pp. 82-84.)

The contract for building the vessel was signed October 15th, and presently the Captain was able to report that the keel had been laid, and that the little Honmoku shipyard was alive with busy men: the little sturdy, quick-witted, deft-fingered Japanese ship-carpenters. She was to carry a precious cargo, and must weather many a wild storm upon dangerous waters, and therefore needed to be as staunchly built as choice material and human skill would permit. "Strength, utility and neatness were alone considered in building, all ornamentation being avoided." But never was a prettier sight on the Four Seas of Japan than this dainty, lady-like little vessel, with her fine lines, her pure white hull and sails, and everything as spick and span about her as in a millionaire's yacht. Her very simplicity, beauty and purity made her a part of the Gospel of the fair white Christ, whose messengers she was to bear.

The best available materials went into the little ship. All timbers, strakes and deadwoods were of the best hard woods that grow in the forests of Japan, including the beautiful and costly

keyaki, the mahogany of Japan; while decks and planking, and her larger spars, were of Oregon pine, the smaller spars being of *hinoki*, another valuable Japanese wood. The hull was copper-fastened and copper-sheathed. From stem to stern-post she measured seventy-five feet, with a length over all of eighty-five, and was seventeen feet in the beam, her carrying capacity being eighty-two tons. In rig she was a two-masted fore-and-aft schooner, with fine lofty spars and a splendid spread of canvas when under full sail. She was registered at Lloyds with the highest rating, "Star A1, 10 years." The 'tween-decks was entirely taken up with cabins and forecastle, providing accommodation for the missionary-captain and his family, as well as for one or more Japanese evangelists and the seven members of the crew. There was also a cozy stateroom for an occasional guest, and to be a guest on the vessel for a few days or a few weeks was something to be long anticipated and longer remembered, with pleasure.

In July, 1899, the vessel was ready for launching. The sea bottom at Honmoku Beach stretches out shoal and flat. In the days when Yedo Bay was the usual baptistry for the Yokohama Baptist Church, the administrator of the ordinance often had to lead the candidates far out through the shallow water to find depth sufficient for baptizing; and a cold experience it was wading back and forth, in winter months, with a bitter wind on the shallows. Even at high tide it must have been a work of toil and patience to get the vessel afloat. A few weeks sufficed to step the masts, rig the shrouds, bend the sails, and put everything in readiness for her maiden voyage.

On September 13th, the Dedicatory Service was held. The name "Fukuin Maru," which was to become a household word not only to the Islanders of the Inner and Outer Seas, but to multitudes in America and other lands, was the happy suggestion of the writer's brother, then also a missionary in Yokohama, who, with the born love of a Blue-Nose for the sea and all that sails on it, had been deeply interested in the construction of the vessel. It is pronounced *Foo-Koo-een Mah-roo*, with the last syllable, *roo*, very short and unaccented, and means "The Gospel," "The Glad Tidings" or the "Ship of the Good News." Truly in God's good providence the little vessel was to prove a bearer of glad tidings to many a dark and comfortless heart.

The First Voyage of the Ship. (Pp. 91-92.)

Her first voyage was to be an exciting one, because of a typhoon into whose fringe she ran off the wild coast of Kii. Let us have the story in the Captain's own words:

“It was a bad time of the year, and the barometer began to fall after we left, but we had a good run down the gulf and around the coast into the Kii Channel. We made sometimes five miles, sometimes twelve, per hour. We ran neck and neck on the Tuesday morning with the steamer *Otaru Maru* for several hours. We averaged ‘to the good’ nine miles an hour until within fifty miles of Kobe, with a fair prospect of getting in on Tuesday evening, when it began to blow and the sea rose. Well, the upshot of it was that I spent five days over the other fifty miles, and days of hard work. We had three struggles during that time, beat up into the Gulf of Osaka three times, and had to run out before a gale as many times. The last gale was very heavy, and after twelve hours of hard beating and straining to keep my ground I had to give in and run out through the Tennis Straits again in the night. It thundered, it rained, it fairly howled, and the sea ran high, and by flashes of vivid lightning I picked my way through the passage. It was a grand sight, though, and all through the vessel behaved splendidly. Twice during those five days I had to beat off a lee shore, and once drifted down to within ten feet of a rock bed in a dead calm. When we got into Hiogo Bay, and I got my clothes off and into bed for the first time in a week, I could not help feeling grateful for the experience. After a few hours’ rest I got up hale and hearty, and congratulated myself on having had it out with the young lady at the very outset and *once* for all.”

Thus far the Captain’s log. Many a day in the years that followed, when typhoon gales have swept the Island shores, or on wild and rainy nights when difficult and dangerous channels, unlighted and uncharted, had to be navigated, was there like need of utmost alertness and endurance of mind and body.

Conversion of Hirata San. (Pp. 140-141, 143.)

This lasted two years, and then something happened. One of the men fell overboard in a winter gale and was drowned. God used this to move our friend’s heart. He began to inquire, but how? Must he learn English? No. Would he not have to go to school and study before he could find any help from Christianity? So little impression had the two years on the ship made! Ignorant to the extent of not being able to read or write the simple Japanese *Kana*, or syllable alphabet, morally crooked in all his ways, was there any hope of his being changed? In deep disappointment, almost with disgust, we answered his inquiries. We did not believe him sincere then nor did we later on when he professed faith in Christ.

We refused baptism, but there was a change, even we could not deny it; yes, a change at last, slight indeed, but growing in force continually until the old man became completely new. No mere figure of speech or saintly cant is this, but hard solid fact. He was changed from the gambling, lying, thieving, quarrelsome, ignorant tool of the Evil One to a true child of God. No miracles these days, say some! No, not if this is not one. The quarrelsome man became the peacemaker, and the man of evil life an example to all. So far so good!

“Captain,” said an Islander one day, “I enjoyed the talk immensely last night.”

“Whose talk?”

“Why, Hirata San, as you know, has been preaching every night for a week in this village.” As a matter of fact we did not know. That was the beginning but by no means the end. In the measure of his previous degradation was his conviction of sin. In the measure of this conviction were his appreciation of God’s wondrous mercy and his longing to render service of love.

We tried to teach him but failed. He was outside our methods somehow. But he pored over the old Book of books in every spare moment, and so we left him to God’s spirit. The harsh hands became gentle in service for others. The pride of other days became loving humility that would not be refused. The shrewdness of evil times turned to a remarkable thoughtfulness and resourcefulness in finding ways of service. Added to all, he developed a remarkable ability to hold a mixed audience with his powerful presentation of God’s love and mercy.

Long had we desired some systematic plan for colportage work in the Islands. A word spoken in jest gave the needed clue. We were lowering a boat together. “How did you fare with your meeting last night?” we asked.

“Oh, very well indeed,” said he. “We shall have to get you a little mission ship,” said we in jest, “if you keep on like this.”

“Yes,” said he, in jest also, pointing to a little Japanese sailing craft, “one like that.”

That night we did some thinking and praying. The result, together with the generosity of some friends, was that a little vessel was built and Hirata San was placed in charge of her to carry on colportage work in the many islands we visit

As he preaches to a crowd one night, Captain Kobayashi stands with Captain Bickel in a dark corner, listening in wonder at the eloquence of this unlettered sailor, and says, “Captain, I don’t understand it, but that is what you people call the power

of God. I wish you would let him come and speak to my students." It was this twice-born Hirata, "this half-sized sinner with a big sense of shame and a big appreciation of God's mercy," this saint of the fore-castle, who at the deck-house door at three bells of the middle watch, when the Captain had just returned from one of his nightly tramps across the hills, said in reply to the request that he convey a Bible to a certain man in the morning, "He is not ready yet for this Bible, but he has another. You are his Bible. He is watching you. As you fail, Christ fails; as you live Christ, so Christ is revealed to him."

Progress of the Work. (Pp. 254, 256-257.)

The eighteenth year of the Era of the *Fukuin Maru* promised to be one of unusual growth in the Inland Sea Mission. The new mission ship, released by order of government from her moorings in the pine-fringed bight of Miyanoura after chafing at her cables for a year and a half, was again cruising among the Islands, and everywhere there was a "sound of abundance of rain." In the several inner sea groups, in which work had been prosecuted since the first *Fukuin Maru* made her voyage of discovery, the new Teaching had already won a large place for itself. On Shozu, on Ikuchi, on Oshima, in the Kurashiki group, everywhere believers and enquirers were multiplying. The light was spreading. New islands, new villages were opening their doors to the Gospel messengers. Sunday schools, various kinds of Christian societies, industrial enterprises and the like were increasing in number and influence. . . .

Apart from the three hundred baptized believers there had arisen a great body of adherents, well-wishers and friends of the Captain and his work. The four thousand boys and girls in the Sunday schools, the several thousands of interested persons listed on the ship's books and reading the ship's literature, the forty thousand members of that four-hundred-section class in Christian doctrine which had been meeting for sixteen years, all these and many more counted the visits of the little ship the visits of a friend. In scores of islands she had become a part of the community life. Where her Captain had been a stranger and a foreigner, uncompanied save for the companionship of the ever-present Lord, he was now the universal friend, "the best loved man in the Islands."

The membership of the *Fukuin Maru* Church had increased tenfold in eight years. Though scattered over sixty islands, they had been well shepherded, and the Captain could say of them, "Of those whom Thou hast given me I have lost none." The church was alive and growing, and the day seemed already near

when there would be a thousand names on its roll. We of the mainland had begun to anticipate a time when the number of Island Christians would overtake and surpass the aggregate membership of all the mainland Baptist churches. The Japanese Baptist Convention, which had been somewhat inclined to look askance on the Inland Sea Mission as an erratic effort on behalf of ignorant and irresponsible peasants and fishermen, had come to recognize the importance both of the field and of the work, and had asked that the groups of Christians on the Islands be erected into an Island Association, to have equal standing in the Convention with the several other associations. For while the whole body of believers on the Islands were still enrolled in the *Fukuin Maru* Church, already the local groups of Christians who worshipped at Tonosho, Setoda, Agenosho, Kurashi, Hirado, and elsewhere were practically branch churches, ripening for separate organization. Humanly speaking, the day was not far when on every important island there would be a church of Jesus Christ, of men and women saved through His grace and united in His service. The year 1917 was expected to bring that prospect a long way toward realization.

“Sunset and Evening Star.” (Pp. 266-267, 268-269.)

The intense physical and nervous strain of the work, however, rapidly told upon even his wrought-iron constitution, and already in the second year of his mission he found his health seriously threatened. From that time forward, he was probably never in sound and comfortable health. Again and again he was compelled to lay up the mission craft in some snug cove among the Islands, and lie up, himself, for repairs. For the most part, however, the ardour of his soul overcame the weakness of his body, and he remained at his post, doing more than a man's work, in spite of feebleness and pain.

As remarked elsewhere, the conditions under which he laboured became gradually less exacting, as his parish became familiar ground, and the vessel's equipment more efficient; and the Captain's health, we thought, was slowly returning to a normal state. Then came the serious illness of February, 1917. It passed, as other attacks had passed, but its effects still lingered when the time came for the Annual Meetings at Tonosho. To the widely scattered Island Christians these meetings were the great event of the year, the one opportunity for mutual acquaintance and fellowship and counsel. Without their beloved leader's presence, half the joy and inspiration would be lacking. So the Captain was there, spending himself prodigally day by day to be a blessing to them all. So they kept the feast with

gladness, not dreaming that they should see his face no more

It was found necessary to perform a slight surgical operation. No serious consequences were anticipated. A few days' rest and he would be back on his ship. What new villages, new islands could he bring into his next cruise? What new features could he introduce, that would further the progress of the work? He must not miss calling on Kato Suji-saburo, the gruff old farmer on Kitagi, and on Tanaka Haru-ko, the sick widow on Innoshima.

The operation was apparently successful. The wound quickly healed. But the patient did not make the expected rapid recovery. Something was wrong. He had drawn too heavily on his reserves. The effects of his February illness were still in his blood, a subtle poison that baffled the doctor's skill. Septic peritonitis and septic pneumonia, they called it, for which the *materia medica* contained no remedy.

She who had for twenty years shared his voyages and his labours was beside him, and loving friends about him. All was done that human love and skill could do. There was another Presence, too, in that quiet chamber, as the sun went down, that of Him whom he had loved and whom he had served with a love and loyalty beyond what is common to man, of Him with whom he had companied many a lonely night at the vessel's wheel, of Him who had been with Nagai Minoru in the thatched cottage on Shozu Shima—the presence of Him of whom our great poet has written,

“And I shall see my Pilot face to face,
When I have crossed the Bar.”

It was the 11th of May and eventide. The sunset glow was fading over the Inland Sea. Down on the Little White Ship the “second dog watch” was ending, and the sailor on duty strolled up the deck to strike the “eight bells” that usher in the first watch of the night. But for the Captain the dawn was breaking. It was morning in heaven. The Captain had made his last port. The Bar was crossed and he had met his Pilot face to face.

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